

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claim 1 (original): A method of providing access to a candidate's personal background data, wherein the data have been verified, the method comprising:

a. establishing a data record, relating to the candidate's personal background data, in a digital storage medium, the data record associated with a unique identifier and including

(i) a set of components based on information supplied by the candidate, each component being potentially verifiable, and

(ii) a corresponding set of query results, the corresponding set including, with respect to each component, the result of a verification query to a third party;

b. communicating the identifier to the candidate;

c. receiving, over a communication network, the identifier from an outside user wanting verification of the candidate's personal background data, the outside user having received the identifier directly or indirectly from the candidate; and

d. distributing, to the outside user, over the communication network, an electronic document including the data record and an electronic authentication of the contents of the data record, the electronic authentication capable of revealing unauthorized modifications of the contents of the data record.

Claim 2 (original): A method according to claim 1, wherein establishing the data record includes:

- a. from a computer at a first location, separately specifying over a network to a host computer a set of components of the candidate's personal background data, each component being potentially verifiable by contacting a third party;
- b. storing, in a digital storage medium in communication with the host computer, the set of components;
- c. for each component of the set, identifying a relevant third party and pertinent contact information therefor;
  - communicating a query to the relevant third party to verify the component, and obtaining a query result from the query; and
  - associating the query result with the component and storing the query result in the storage medium.

Claim 3 (original): A method according to claim 2, wherein specifying the set of components includes providing responses via a set of templates, the set of templates having at least one member and being structured to evince the content of the set of components.

Claim 4 (original): A method according to claim 2, wherein specifying the set of components is performed over the Internet.

Claim 5 (original): A method according to claim 4, in which obtaining a query result from the query is performed over the Internet.

Claim 6 (original): A method according to claim 4, wherein specifying the set of components includes specifying the set of components to a World Wide Web server.

Claim 7 (original): A method according to claim 6, in which communicating a query to the relevant third party to verify the component is performed over the Internet.

Claim 8 (original): A method according to claim 7, wherein communicating a query to the relevant third party to verify the component is performed automatically and includes sending the query as E-Mail.

Claim 9 (original): A method according to claim 1, in which communicating the identifier to the candidate is performed over the Internet.

Claim 10 (original): A method according to claim 9, wherein communicating the identifier to the candidate is performed automatically and includes sending the identifier as E-Mail over the Internet.

Claim 11 (original): A method according to claim 1, wherein the electronic document is distributed in the form of an electronic mail message.

Claim 12 (original): A method according to claim 1, wherein the electronic document is distributed in the form of an electronic file.

Claim 13 (original): A method according to claim 1, wherein the electronic authentication is an electronic watermark.

Claim 14 (original): A method according to claim 1, wherein the electronic authentication is an electronic certification.

Claim 15 (original): A method according to claim 1, wherein the set of components includes the candidate's résumé information, and wherein the set of query results includes information verifying the candidate's résumé information.

Claim 16 (original): A system for providing access to a candidate's personal background data, wherein the data have been verified, the system comprising:

(a) a storage arrangement on which is stored a database having a plurality of data records, each data record relating to personal background data of a candidate, each data record associated with a unique identifier that is communicated to the candidate and including

(i) a set of components based on information supplied by a candidate, each component being potentially verifiable, and

(ii) a corresponding set of query results, the corresponding set including, with respect to each component, the result of a verification query to a third party; and

(b) a process, running on a computer in communication with the digital storage medium, for selectively distributing, to an authorized person presenting an identifier received directly or indirectly from a candidate, over a communication network, an electronic document including the candidate's data record and an electronic authentication of the contents of the data record, the electronic authentication capable of revealing unauthorized modifications of the contents of the data record.

Claim 17 (original): A computer-readable medium having embodied therein an electronic document, the electronic document comprising:

(a) a data record including

(i) a set of components based on information supplied by a candidate, each component being potentially verifiable, and

(ii) a corresponding set of query results, the corresponding set including, with respect to each component, the result of a verification query to a third party; and

(b) an electronic authentication of the contents of the data record, the electronic authentication capable of revealing unauthorized modifications of the contents of the data record.

Claim 18 (original): A computer-readable medium according to claim 17, wherein the electronic authentication is an electronic watermark.

Claim 19 (original): A computer-readable medium according to claim 17, wherein the electronic authentication is an electronic certification.

Claim 20 (original): A computer-readable medium according to claim 17, wherein the set of components includes the candidate's résumé information, and wherein the set of query results includes information verifying the candidate's résumé information.

Claim 21 (new): A system for structuring a database to provide access to a candidate's personal background data, wherein at least a portion of the data has been authenticated, the system comprising:

(a) a storage arrangement on which is stored a database having a plurality of data records, each data record relating to personal background data of an individual and including

(i) a set of components, each component being potentially verifiable, and

(ii) a corresponding set of query results, the corresponding set including, with respect to each component, the result of a verification query to a third party; and

(b) a process, running on a computer in communication with the digital storage medium, for selectively providing access, to a person having the candidate's authorization therefor, to a data record pertaining to the candidate.

Claim 22 (new): A system according to claim 21, wherein the process provides access selectively to the person upon presentation of a unique identifier associated with the data record pertaining to the candidate.

Claim 23 (new): A system according to claim 22, wherein the unique identifier is communicated to the authorized person.

Claim 24 (new): A system according to claim 23, wherein the unique identifier is communicated over the Internet.

Claim 25 (new): A system according to claim 23, wherein the unique identifier is communicated by e-mail.

Claim 26 (new): A method of structuring a database to provide access to a candidate's personal background data, wherein at least a portion of the data has been verified, the method comprising:

- (a) establishing a data record, relating to the candidate's personal background data, in a digital storage medium, the data record including
  - (i) a set of components based on information supplied by the candidate, each component being potentially verifiable, and
  - (ii) a corresponding set of query results, the corresponding set including, with respect to each component, the result of a verification query to a third party; and
- (b) selectively providing access, to a person having the candidate's authorization therefor, to the data record pertaining to the candidate.

Claim 27 (new): A method according to claim 26, wherein the access is provided selectively to the person upon presentation of a unique identifier associated with the data record.

Claim 28 (new): A method according to claim 27, further comprising communicating the unique identifier to the authorized person.

Claim 29 (new): A method according to claim 28, wherein the unique identifier is communicated over the Internet.

Claim 30 (new): A method according to claim 28, wherein the unique identifier is communicated by e-mail.

Claim 31 (new): A method of structuring a database to provide access to a candidate's personal background data, wherein at least a portion of the data has been verified, the method comprising:

- (a) establishing a data record, relating to the candidate's personal background data, in a digital storage medium, the data record including
  - (i) a set of components based on information supplied by the candidate, each component being potentially verifiable, and
  - (ii) a corresponding set of query results, the corresponding set including, with respect to each component, the result of a verification query to a third party; and
- (b) providing to the candidate a mechanism to selectively distribute access to the data record to a person selectable by the candidate; and
- (c) selectively providing access, to the person selected by the candidate, to the data record pertaining to the candidate.

Claim 32 (new): A method according to claim 31, wherein the access is provided selectively to the person upon presentation of a unique identifier associated with the data record.

Claim 33 (new): A method according to claim 32, further comprising communicating the unique identifier to the selected person.

Claim 34 (new): A method according to claim 33, wherein the unique identifier is communicated over the Internet.

Claim 35 (new): A method according to claim 33, wherein the unique identifier is communicated by e-mail.

Claim 36 (new): A method according to claim 31, wherein the mechanism permits the candidate to specify what portions of the data record are to be distributed to the selected person.

Claim 37 (new): A method according to claim 31, wherein the mechanism permits the candidate to specify the selected person.

Claim 38 (new): A method according to claim 37, wherein the candidate specifies the selected person using an e-mail address of the selected person.

Claim 39 (new): A method of structuring a database to provide access to a candidate's résumé, wherein at least a portion of the résumé has been verified, the method comprising:

(a) establishing a data record, relating to the candidate's résumé, in a digital storage medium, the data record including



- (i) a set of components based on information supplied by the candidate, each component being potentially verifiable, and
- (ii) a corresponding set of query results, the corresponding set including, with respect to each component, the result of a verification query to a third party; and
- (b) selectively providing access, to a person having the candidate's authorization therefore, to the data record pertaining to the candidate.

Claim 40 (new): A method according to claim 39, wherein the access is provided selectively to the person upon presentation of a unique identifier associated with the data record.

Claim 41 (new): A method according to claim 40, further comprising communicating the unique identifier to the authorized person.

Claim 42 (new): A method according to claim 41, wherein the unique identifier is communicated over the Internet.

Claim 43 (new): A method according to claim 41, wherein the unique identifier is communicated by e-mail.

Claim 44 (new): A method of structuring a database to provide access to a candidate's résumé, wherein at least a portion of the résumé has been verified, the method comprising:

- (a) establishing a data record, relating to the candidate's résumé, in a digital storage medium, the data record including
  - (i) a set of components based on information supplied by the candidate, each component being potentially verifiable, and

(ii) a corresponding set of query results, the corresponding set including, with respect to each component, the result of a verification query to a third party; and

(b) providing to the candidate a mechanism to selectively distribute access to the data record to a person selectable by the candidate; and

(c) selectively providing access, to the person selected by the candidate, to the data record pertaining to the candidate.

Claim 45 (new): A method according to claim 44, wherein the access is provided selectively to the person upon presentation of a unique identifier associated with the data record.

Claim 46 (new): A method according to claim 45, further comprising communicating the unique identifier to the selected person.

Claim 47 (new): A method according to claim 46, wherein the unique identifier is communicated over the Internet.

Claim 48 (new): A method according to claim 46, wherein the unique identifier is communicated by e-mail.

Claim 49 (new): A method according to claim 44, wherein the mechanism permits the candidate to specify what portions of the data record are to be distributed to the selected person.

Claim 50 (new): A method according to claim 44, wherein the mechanism permits the candidate to specify the selected person.

Claim 51 (new): A method according to claim 50, wherein the candidate specifies the selected person using an e-mail address of the selected person.

Claim 52 (new): A system for structuring a database to provide access to a candidate's personal background data, wherein at least a portion of the data has been verified, the system comprising:

- a. a first process, running on a computer in communication with a digital storage medium, that establishes a data record for the data in the digital storage medium, the data record including
  - (i) a set of components based on information supplied by the candidate, each component being potentially verifiable, and
  - (ii) a corresponding set of query results, the corresponding set including, with respect to each component, the result of a verification query to a third party; and
- b. a second process, running on a computer in communication with the digital storage medium, that selectively provides access, to a person having the candidate's authorization therefor, to the data record pertaining to the candidate.

Claim 53 (new): A system according to claim 52, wherein the process provides access selectively to the person upon presentation of a unique identifier associated with the data record pertaining to the candidate.

Claim 54 (new): A system according to claim 53, wherein the unique identifier is communicated to the authorized person.

Claim 55 (new): A system according to claim 54, wherein the unique identifier is communicated over the Internet.

Claim 56 (new): A system according to claim 54, wherein the unique identifier is communicated by e-mail.